right to be maintained by society, the growing individualism of the age turned the same frigid scepticism, as was later directed against the Speenharnland policy by the reformers of 1834. Like the friends of Job, it saw in misfortune, not the chastisement of love, but the punishment for sin. The result was that, while the penalties on the vagrant were redoubled, religious opinion laid less emphasis on the obligation of charity than upon the duty of work, and that the admonitions which had ^ formerly been turned upon uncharitable covetousness were now directed against improvidence and idleness. The characteristic sentiment was that of -Milton's friend, Hartlib : " The law of God saith, * he that will not work, let him not eat.' This would be a sore scourge and smart whip for idle persons if... none should be suffered to eat till they had wrought for it." "•

The new attitude found expression in the rare bursts of public activity provoked by the growth of pauperism between 1640 and 1660. The idea of dealing with it on sound business principles, by means of a corporation which would combine profit with philanthropy, was being sedulously preached by a small group of reformers.[147] Parliament took it up, and in 1649 passed an Act for the relief and employment of the poor

and the punishment of beggars, under which a company was to be established with power to apprehend vagrants, to offer them the choice between work and whipping, and to set to compulsory labour all other poor persons, including children without means of maintenance*[188] Eight years later the prevalence of vagrancy produced an Act of such extreme severity, as almost to recall the suggestion made a generation later by Fletcher of Saltoun, that vagrants should be sent to the galleys. It provided that, since offenders could rarely be taken in the act, any vagrant who failed to satisfy the justices that he had a good reason for being on the roads should be arrested and